

THOMAS STARS IN COLD WAR SOCCER BATTLE

By ARGUS

Wycombe Wanderers 1, Kingstonian 1

SOME of the frost and peevishness of the cold war seems to have rubbed off on the Isthmian League. Certainly Kingstonian—shadows of the team which so nearly completed cup and league double last season—tried to make up for declining soccer skill by somewhat belligerent tackling and blocking, and operative gestures, at Loakes Park on Saturday.

Little wonder that the whistle of referee, Mr. E. L. J. Press, sounded a sad lament throughout an undistinguished game.

Only once was the connoisseur really satisfied and that was in the 77th minute when K's international inside-left Hugh Lindsay scored the completely arrogant goal. He left John Fisher and John Bartholomew lying on their faces in the Wycombe penalty area after a graceful arcing run of fully 40 yards carried out at phenomenal speed.

BLOTTED OUT

But this equaliser was the one glimpse of dapper little Hughie in his true England form. He was blotted out of the game by Wycombe's most talented teenage prospect for many years—right-half Dave Thomas.

Revelling in the clash of brains, Dave was the slim breakwater upon which the best of Lindsay's moves crashed in vain. Asked to choose an international prospect, few would have hesitated.

Alas . . . the Lindsay-Thomas duel was only a glittering fragment of a mediocre whole.

Still struggling to find the confidence which only a home win can give, the Wanderers went back on their thoroughly game and stylish performance at Tooting.

The lack of thrust in the Wycombe forward line was again painfully obvious. The Wanderers had by far the more chances and they muffed them consistently. Paul Bates was the main culprit but he seemed to be carrying the shooting burden of the entire forward line.

LIVELY VETERANS

Wycombe's two liveliest attackers were veterans Jack Tomlin and Cliff Trott. The intelligent ball control and positional play of Tomlin was a lesson in itself while Trott, as active as a moth in candlelight, never gave up trying.

Facing one of the poorest attacks to be seen at Loakes Park for a long time, the Wanderers' defence was rarely in dire trouble.

Nineteen-year-old debut goalkeeper Alan Jones had few direct shots to deal with but he always looked very competent. It was a pity that some of his colleagues—notably Fisher—did not give him the space he needed.

Sometimes there seemed to be no contact between Jones and his co-defenders and the ball was booted or headed out of his very hands.

COSTLY MISSES

During an even first half, in which the rate of fouls gradually increased, there were only two really dangerous efforts. Rockell had a splendid try for Wycombe when he sent a drive screaming across the face of the K's goal while visiting right winger Ken Harris beat two Wycombe defenders in a surprise dash and ended with a near miss.

The Wanderers should have ensured the points in the first ten minutes after the break. Worley, hitherto subdued, broke away twice to make chances for Bates. Both were sent wide.

Bates was to have an unexpected revenge. In the 60th minute he was sent tumbling in the penalty area as he was pivoting to shoot and the K's defenders were staggered to see the referee pointing to the spot. Beck's penalty kick tore into the net.

After Lindsay's equaliser the game boiled up. K's finished the stronger and pressed ferociously for a winner but they so nearly slipped up when Rockell broke away to hit goalkeeper Groves with his drive.

HIS SOLO FOILS WYCOMBE

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WYCOMBE, still seeking their first home victory in the Isthmian League, were foiled this time only by Kingstonian's international inside left, Hughie Lindsay.

With reserve men at centre forward and centre half—and well below their best—Kingstonian faced defeat 15 minutes from time.

Then Lindsay, subdued earlier on, beat three Wycombe defenders in a great solo run and smacked in a brilliant equaliser.

After a goal-less first half Wycombe took the lead 15 minutes after the interval when right back Beck converted a penalty for a foul on Bates.

The goal spurred Kingstonian to hit back, but with lack of punch in the middle they rarely looked like scoring until Lindsay showed his brilliance.